



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **TENNESSEE CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS REACH RECORD LEVELS** *NEARLY \$500 MILLION COLLECTED FOR CHILDREN*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— The Tennessee Department of Human Services collected nearly half a billion dollars in child support last fiscal year. Collections have increased 78 percent over the last five years. Collections for the 2006 state fiscal year totaled more than \$478 million compared to \$269 million in 2001. Technology and improved enforcement tools have contributed to the increase in collections.

“DHS is committed to doing all we can to ensure that children receive the support they are owed,” said Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge. “There is no doubt that children who are receiving their support in a timely and consistent manner are much better off than those children who receive sporadic or no support at all. We are constantly looking for parents who fail to do the right and legal thing by their children, and we will use every enforcement tool necessary to ensure the children are supported.”

DHS relies on programs such as wage withholding, Financial Institution Data Match, IRS tax intercept, license revocation and Tennessee Lottery offsets to make sure that children are receiving their court-ordered child support. By far, wage withholding, is the most successful enforcement tool. The federal IRS tax intercept program is increasingly becoming a major means of support for children, with over \$38 million in IRS refunds claimed for Tennessee children this year.

But there are other, lesser known ways to aid children who are not being supported. The Department recently received a \$3,500 check that was seized by the state of New Jersey for a child support case in Tennessee. The non-custodial parent won a boxing match in Atlantic City, and the winning purse was sent to cover a small amount of the parent's unpaid child support. The Department also participates in the Child Support Lien Network (CSLN). The CSLN is comprised of a consortium of 20 states working with various insurance companies to identify insurance settlements that can be claimed to help pay the non-custodial parent's overdue child support obligation.

Nearly all judicial districts across the state have shown an increase in their collections over last year. Collections for Rutherford and Cannon Counties (16<sup>th</sup> judicial district) jumped 15 percent to \$12 million last fiscal year. The second highest jump was in Montgomery and Robertson Counties (19<sup>th</sup> judicial district) with \$17.5 million in collections for last fiscal year. Shelby County has the largest caseload and also the highest collections for last year, with 60,000 cases and \$101 million in collections. Davidson County collections were \$55.4 million, Knox County collected \$29.2 million and Hamilton County \$31.2 million.

For those children who are receiving regular payments, DHS is making it easier for the custodial parent to access their child support payments through direct deposit or debit cards.

There are currently 242,000 cases with child support orders in Tennessee.

For more information on the Tennessee Child Support Program, visit:  
[http://state.tn.us/humanserv/cs/cs\\_main.htm](http://state.tn.us/humanserv/cs/cs_main.htm)

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